

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 02217 271919Z

16

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

/094 W

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R 271445Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2435

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR EGEN EG

SUBJECT: ARAB BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL: MEETING IN CAIRO

1. BOYCOTT COMMISSION MEETINGS CONTINUE BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, BUT COMMISSIONER GENERAL MAHGOUB PROVIDES TIDBITS AT END OF DAILY SESSIONS THAT PROVIDE SOME INDICATIONS OF GOINGS-ON. HIS COMMENTARY IS MADE IN ARABIC, CAUSING DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATING COMPANY NAMES, PARTICULARLY SINCE HE REFUSES TO TAKE QUESTIONS FROM WESTERN NEWSMEN. HE IS REPORTEDLY ENJOYING HIS ROLE AND HAS BEHAVED IN A HIGH-HANDED AND ALMOST OFFENSIVE MANNER TO AT LEAST ONE COMPANY TRYING TO GET OFF THE BLACKLIST (BRITISH LEYLAND).

2. UK EMBOFFS TELL US THAT LEYLAND REPS ARE HOPEFUL THAT GOE WILL BRING SUFFICIENT PRESSURE ON COMMISSION TO SECURE DELETION FROM LIST. THEY HAVE MADE STRONG
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 02217 271919Z

REPRESENTATIONS IN THAT DIRECTION, AND FEEL EGYPTIANS

ARE INTERESTED ENOUGH IN PROPOSED 50 MILLION POUND (STERLING) INVESTMENT TO DO NECESSARY. ONLY POSSIBLE STICKING POINT IS FACT THAT LEYLAND HAS CONTRACT TO SUPPLY VEHICLE CHASSIS TO ISRAEL UNTIL END 75. ISRAELIS HAVE THREATENED TO GO TO COURT IF CONTRACT BROKEN, AND BRITISH THINK THAT ARABS MAY BE WILLING OVERLOOK THIS RESIDUAL ASPECT OF FORMER CLOSE COOPERATION.

3. GENERAL FEELING HERE IS THAT STATUS OF CBS AND NBC NEWS SERVICES WILL FINALLY BE CLARIFIED, WITH PARENT COMPANIES STAYING ON, AS WELL AS PRODUCT LINES, BUT RADIO, TV AND PRESS SERVICES SPECIFICALLY OFF AS RESULT OF BENEFICIAL SERVICES THEY PERFORM FOR ARAB NATION.

4. IN FURTHER ACTIONS, COMMISSION DELETED DAYCO RUBBER CO. OF DAYTON AND GENERALCO CONTAINERS INC., A GERBER SUBSIDIARY, AS WELL AS ONE FRENCH AND ONE THAI COMPANY FROM LIST. FOUR OTHER COMPANIES (NONE US) WERE ADDED TO BLACKLIST, BUT COMMISSION REPORTEDLY DECIDED NOT TO ADD 12 ADDITIONAL FIRMS THAT WERE UNDER CONSIDERATION.

5. RUMORS CIRCULATE THAT MEETINGS MAY NOT LAST ENTIRE TEN DAYS ORIGINALLY PLANNED. UNANIMITY OF OPINION ON MOST ISSUES, IN CONTRAST TO DIVERGENCY OF VIEWS AT PAST SESSIONS, IS CONSIDERED TO BE MOST LIKELY REASON.

6. COMMENT: LOCAL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS HAS CARRIED FEB 26 REMARKS OF PRESIDENT FORD AND SENATOR CHURCH ON SUBJECT OF BOYCOTT WITHOUT EDITORIAL COMMENT. (ARABIC PRESS MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TOMORROW.) EGYPTIANS HAVE IN PAST POINTED OUT THAT BOYCOTT TECHNIQUE WAS ACTUALLY LEARNED FROM AMERIANS, FIRST WITH JAPAN AND GERMANY, AND PRESENTLY WITH CUBA.

7. EMBASSY HAS DEIFINITE IMPRESSION THAT, LEFT TO HER OWN DEVICES, EGYPT WOULD NOT BE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED BY BOYCOTT MATTERS, PARTICULARLY SINCE SUCCESS OF OPEN DOOR AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS ARE SO HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON FOREIGN PARTICIPATION. EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 02217 271919Z

ISRAEL BY A POTENTIAL INVESTOR WOULD BE OF MARGINAL INTEREST TO GOE, WERE IT NOT FOR NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING ARAB SOLIDARITY AND AVOIDING APPEARANCE OF ANYTHING LESS THAN TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE STRUGGLE. UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, EGYPT CAN BE EXPECTED TO ABIDE BY BOYCOTT RULES, APPLYING PRESSURE FOR RELEASE OF A COMPANY WHEN, AS IN CASE OF LEYLAND, IT IS IN GOE'S INTEREST TO DO SO, AND COMPANY TAKES CERTAIN MINIMUM STEPS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOYCOTTS, MEETINGS, BUSINESS FIRMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CAIRO02217
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750070-0443
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975028/aaaaagtk.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARAB BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL: MEETING IN CAIRO
TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, EIND, ETRD, XF, XX
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006